

Filed for intro on 03/30/2000

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 578

By DeBerry L

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of Ms. Bettye Jean Jones
of Memphis.

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly were greatly saddened and deeply moved to learn of the death of Ms. Bettye Jean Jones; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Jones was an exemplary public servant and consummate professional who worked assiduously to improve the quality of life for her fellow citizens in numerous capacities; and

WHEREAS, a lifetime resident of Bunker Hill, Bettye Jones was a lion of leadership and a pillar of her community; and

WHEREAS, after graduating from Hamilton High School, Ms. Jones attended LeMoyne College, Memphis State University, and Shelby State Community College and pledged the Zeta Phi Beta sorority; she received her real estate certificate from State Technical Institute; and

WHEREAS, her exemplary professional life included her years of dedicated service at the War on Poverty, the Community Action Agency, and the Sickle Cell Council. Ms. Jones served with acumen and alacrity for 24 years as the director of the Metro Senior Center with the Metropolitan Interfaith Association (MIFA), in which position she earned the respect of her peers and clients alike for the superior quality of her work; and

WHEREAS, affectionately known as "Bubba," Ms. Jones was a mentor and a friend who frequently demonstrated compassion for her fellow human by means of both her words and her actions; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Jones displayed her tremendous leadership abilities and organizational skills as founder of the Bunker Hill Civic Club; she also helped organize the Inner City Voters' Council as a young activist; and

WHEREAS, she was the David who made a career out of taking on the Goliaths of injustice and discrimination, as she relentlessly spoke out on behalf of the rights of minorities, the elderly, and the poor; and

WHEREAS, known as the "Princess of Politics," Ms. Jones worked on every major political campaign, including meritorious service as Speaker Pro Tempore, Lois DeBerry's campaign manager; she had voted as a member of the Electoral College to elect President Bill Clinton; had coordinated the Senior Citizen "Get Out the Vote" campaign; and was a valuable member of the State Democratic Executive Committee for many years, serving as the vice-chair for West Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, Bettye Jones actively served on a number of boards and committees at both the national and local levels, including the board of the Harbor House, Inc.; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Jones's outstanding success as a public servant and civic leader was directly attributable to her reliance on the time-honored values of hard work and common sense, and her uncommon ability to work well with people from all walks of life; and

WHEREAS, as a lasting tribute to her selfless dedication to the betterment of her state and community, a bridge in Memphis was named, "The Bettye Jean Jones Bridge" in her honor by this General Assembly in 1995; and

WHEREAS, loving the Lord and endeavoring to lead an exemplary Christian life, Bettye Jones worshipped God as an active and devout member of the Cane Creek Baptist Church, where she served faithfully for many years as the church clerk, church secretary, and as the

chairperson of many annual church activities, in addition to serving on the Board of Trustees; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Jones was also deeply devoted to her family, and she always endeavored to remain true to family values of the highest order; and

WHEREAS, Bettye Jones enjoyed the loving companionship of her husband, Ossie Columbus Jones, for many years prior to his death, and was the proud mother of their three sons, Michael, David, and Albert; and one daughter, Deborah; and

WHEREAS, she was the proud grandmother of six grandchildren, DeWayne, DeQuel, Deon, Kawanda, Brandon, and DeQuarius Jones; and three great-grandchildren; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Jones also leaves to cherish her memory, her two sisters, Juanita Osborn of Detroit, and Jennie V. Matthews of Memphis; her brother, Stokes D. Trent of Memphis; her brother-in-law, Burl Osborn of Detroit; her two aunts, Katherine Dudley and Cornelia Langston; her uncles, Eugene Trent of Memphis and Nelson Trent of Chicago; four nieces, Denise Anderson, Linda Glenn, Nora Baughns, and Cherry Matthews; and two cousins, Robert Williams and Maudesther Robertson; and

WHEREAS, she will also be sorely missed by her surrogate family, Shirley Bienvenu Wallen, Marvin, Robbie, and Nori; a host of cousins in Detroit and Memphis; other relatives and friends; and

WHEREAS, Bettye Jean Jones has departed this world for a far better one, where she will be reunited with her husband and daughter, Deborah, who preceded her in death; and

WHEREAS, Bettye Jones leaves behind an indelible legacy of integrity and probity in public life, compassion and loyalty in private life and diligence and dedication in all her chosen endeavors; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Jones was a good friend to many people, and she was an endless source of guidance, wisdom, love, and encouragement; her compassionate spirit was a bountiful source of inspiration to all those who knew her and cherished her; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that this General Assembly should pause to remember the life of this exceptional public servant and human being; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED FIRST GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, That we honor the memory of Ms. Bettye Jean Jones, reflecting fondly upon her impeccable character as a community leader, human rights advocate, and trailblazer; and her stalwart commitment to living the examined life with courage and conviction.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That we express our deepest sympathy and offer our condolences to the family and friends of Ms. Bettye Jean Jones.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.